

Washington, D.C. - Representative Lee Terry (NE-02) today made the following statement regarding the loss of Navy Lt. Cmdr. Thomas E. Blake, 33, of Spencer, NE. Blake and his co-pilot were killed September 21 in Jacksonville, FL , in an S-3B Viking jet crash.

"It is tremendously saddening to hear of the death of our friend, Tom," Terry said. "Tom was a good man, husband, father, soldier, and Nebraskan who died doing what he loved for the grateful country he served. Robyn and I are keeping his family in our thoughts and prayers. I also ask everyone to honor his service by keeping in their prayers all of the men and women now risking their lives to serve our nation."

Pilot Blake and co-pilot Lt. Cmdr. Scott Bracher were both 11-year Navy veterans and had been members of the VS-32, Jacksonville 's Viking squadron, for six months. The navy jet crashed near Jacksonville Naval Air Station as it attempted to land in inclement weather.

Blake's wife, Jessica, has worked in both Terry's campaign and congressional offices. Tom and Jessica have a two-year-old son and are expecting a second child soon.

Details of funeral arrangements have not been announced.

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